Universidad del Este

**Analysis of short story: El bosque de los Pigmeos**

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**Isabel Allende (Author)**

Isabel Allende is a Chilean writer. She was born in August 2, 1942 in Lima, Peru. Her mother moved to Chile after her father’s disappearance in 1945 until 1953. That year her mother married a Bolivian diplomat. From there they moved very often. Living in Bolivia she attended a North American private school. Then they moved to Beirut, Lebanon where she attended an English private school. They moved back to Chile in 1958 and she was already well read. She particularly liked William Shakespeare work. She got married to an Engineer, and from there her career took off. She became a t.v. personality in Chile. Also she acted in movie, documentaries and wrote for children and women magazines between 1964 and 1974. She acted in many plays in the 70’s and she also taught literature in Berkley, University of Virginia and in Montclair College in New Jersey. She is now author of 18 books translated into 35 languages. She became and American citizen in 2003.

**Synopsys**

After their awesome adventures in the past, Alexander and Nadia would venture into the heart of Africa. They went to Africa because Alexander grandmother, Kate had to get a story for International Geography. At Kenya they explored the vast capital and venture into the market. In that city Kate met with her colleagues Joel Gonzalez and Timothy Bruce. Over at the market Alexander and Nadia ended up in the magic section, which was crowded by fetishist, witch doctors, healers, warlocks and seers. There, a fat seer by the name Ma-banguese who started to read Alexander’s mind telling him about his sick mother who had cancer. Then she started talk about Alexander and Nadia’s magical abilities and mentioned how Nadia’s Eagle powers could help Alexander’s Jaguar powers. They went into a deep trance were they fought a three headed monster in a world of pain and slavery. After waking up by Kate’s yelling in the market they left, but not without an advice to stay out of danger and to stay together. Then they meet a clergy man from the Roman Catholic Church who was asking to fly to Ngoubé, situated deep in the African jungles to find missionaries that stopped writing. These friars moved to the jungle to help the people tormented by a dark warlock called Sombé. These people situation was getting worse and worse everyday. Also they lived under the harsh rule of a man called Kosongo. This man was considered a semi-god and all knowing immortal by the villagers. Despite the arguments growing between Brother Fernando and the flirtatious Cuban-African pilot Angie Ninderera, Kate and the others agree to come along with the priest and help him find the friars. Angies place crazshe into a small beach and they get isolated from the world. A group of fishermen escort them to the forest, domain of the tyrannical King Kosongo. He usurped the throne of the Queen of old, Nana-asanta. There he rules with his commander Mbembelé and the warlock Sombé. After a ‘misunderstanding’ they get incarcerated and Nadia learns of the enslavement of the pygmy women. Mbembelé brainwashes their children to spy on their families in the forest. Alex and Nadia eventually escape into the forest to search for the pygmies and convince them of rebelling against Kosongo and Mbembelé. In the forest they came across the Queen Nana-asanta who had become a goddess of the jungles and accepted to join them in battle. Later on the leader of the pygmies challenged Kosongo into battle after discovering he was actually the same person as Mbembelé and then after being defeated in battle by the leader pygmy he is chased away by Alexander’s jaguar form. Not long after victory, celebration was interrupted by Sombé. Nadia, who was in the forest communicating, returns as a white eagle with Nana-asanta and many other companions from past adventures to help free and cleanse the land. After defeating him, he is thrown into his pit of crocodiles. Angie succeeds contacting a friend of hers to be rescued. Brother Fernando stayed behind to help the people recover from their situation. After returning home, Alexander persuades Nadia to attend university in the United Stated. Alexander wants to take Nadia to his graduation.

**Analysis**

The main characters in the story are Alexander and Nadia. It talks about two friends who go in an adventure. It mostly develops in Africa and its jungles. The antagonist is the three headed monster: Kosongo, Mbembelé and Sombé. The supporting characters are Kate Cold (Alexander grandmother), Joel Gonzalez (Kate’s coworker), Angie (Pilot), Brother Fernando (Clergy man), Beye-Doku (Pygmy Leader) and Nana-asanta (Ancient queen). This story would be best seen from the myth criticism and archetypal point of view. We observe many magical events in this story that are also reflected in today’s reality. Such is the dark powers behind the governments. In this story we got the young hero, the great mother who returns to her people, and the dark tyrant who takes over a government and the best friend in love with the hero. We also can observe some post-colonialism in the story. In this category we have the situation where the pygmies are enslaved by the tyrant and forced to work. Also the foreigners end up abolishing that slavery and bringing back freedom to the people from that evil tyrant corrupting the society. Also and most important, there’s the Diaspora of the pygmy. How they were forced to leave their homes, their beliefs and their freedom to work for Kosongo. It must be said that this book really went beyond my expectations. I really did not expect it to be this good. Even though it has a mild end, it really touched me because the author made you feel as if you knew each and every character. It really keeps you entertained and it really goes beyond your imagination and transports you to the context they are experiencing.

**References**

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